

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL



MARCH 1967

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THE ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial	2
Sergei Obraztsov and the English Puppeteers. A Verbatim Report	4
Children's Theatre in the Soviet Union Lesley Seyd and Ted Parker	9
Cherkassov and Okhlopkov Marie Seton	16
A Moscow Diary Robert Daglish	19
Trends in Soviet Art Today Laurence H. Bradshaw	21
In My Own Field Aron Vergelis, translated by Martin Lawrence	25
The Training of Orientalists	
Professor Konstantin Tsereteli, introduction by Professor David Lang	26
New Trends in Soviet Education—The New Decree Beatrice King	31
Soviet Criminal Law	36
Book Reviews by: Professor Robert Browning, Stowers Johnson, A. M. Khachadourian, B. P. Pockney	39
SCR Events and Activities	43
Film Programme	45
Forthcoming Events	46
Cover: English Silver from the Kremlin, Moscow, on exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Left: Flagon. Silver-gilt. Gift by Sir John Merrick on his 1620 embassy. Right: Leopard Flagon. (London hall-mark for 1600-1). Bought by the Russian Treasury.	

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Journal of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR
(Free to members)

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EDITORIAL

The purpose of this *Journal* is concerned with more durable things than the shift of politics, and the task of illustrating the strength of sympathy between our two nations in friendship and the exchange of knowledge is one which our Society has pursued for many years with unfaltering confidence. Yet as we write it is impossible to refrain from an expression of pleasure that the Fiftieth Year should be heralded by the visit to England of the Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin, and, as the Anglo-Soviet Exhibition is opened by him at the Victoria and Albert Museum, to learn that a great part of the work of assembling the Exhibition in Moscow was done by his daughter, Mrs. Ludmilla Gvishiani, who herself speaks English fluently. Anglo-Soviet relations have moved forward through the years by this time when the Sword of Stalingrad comes back from Volgograd to London to remind a newer generation of bygone sacrifices of the two cities in comradeship, and when at this Exhibition Harold Wilson, our own Prime Minister standing beside Mr. Kosygin, can with his own wry humour deprecatingly refer to the inability of either Government to find the 'Zinoviev letter'. Surely if anything should draw our two nations together it is the sense of humour that we have in common. Translators are serious people and cannot always draw back this curtain, but if some lighter genius could arrange a parallel exhibition of English and Soviet humour, it would be significant to learn how similar is the laugh on either side.

Now that the full text of the *Communiqué* on the Anglo-Soviet talks has been issued, it is instructive to note the section on Cultural Relations. This advocates in no uncertain terms the work which our Society has been encouraging for so many years, and the relevant paragraphs read so very like an exposition of our own aims as to be worth quoting:

'The two Heads of Government noted the usefulness of general and specialised exhibitions organised in the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, which contribute to the better knowledge of each other's achievements and to the development of Anglo-Soviet trade and economic relations and scientific and technical co-operation.

A Soviet industrial and trade exhibition was planned to be held in London in 1968.

The two sides discussed the state of Anglo-Soviet scientific, technical and cultural relations. They noted that co-operation between the two countries in all these fields was increasing.

A valuable part was played in this by the inter-Governmental agreement on scientific, technological, educational and cultural exchanges, by the

agreements on scientific exchanges between the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the Royal Society of Great Britain, and in co-operation in agricultural research.

It was agreed that the expansion of scientific and technological co-operation directed toward a more rational utilisation of their respective industrial, scientific and technological capacities could be to the great advantage of both countries.

The Ministers responsible for technological questions would meet in the near future to make recommendations to their Government on the further development of scientific and technological co-operation and on any improvements in the machinery needed to achieve this.

It was also considered useful that such meetings should be held on a regular basis.

Both Governments agreed that the purposes of developing Anglo-Soviet contacts, at all levels and in a wide variety of activities could be served by the establishment of an Anglo-Soviet Consultative Committee consisting of leading figures in culture, science, sport and other fields, which would study the possibilities of expanding such contacts in addition to those which already exist, and would submit appropriate recommendations for consideration by the two sides.

The two sides also noted the usefulness of the contacts and exchanges which were developing between trade unions, youth, sports and other bodies in the two countries.'

Readers will be interested to notice how the number of functions and activities of the Society maintains in vigour but for this particular year an important programme lies ahead, and we look forward to arranging a special Fiftieth Year Number of the *Journal* in celebration. It is sad to think that former vice-presidents of the Society, Sir Charles Trevelyan and Dean Hewlett Johnson, are no longer with us to participate. Through all the vicissitudes of the last half-century the Dean's voice was active in the cause of friendship and progress, and his idealism won at least the respect of his opponents. As we go to press we reflect on the passing of another vice-president of the Society, Sir Victor Gollancz, who will be remembered by many for pleasant informal meetings in the early days at Kensington, though his name and his work must take their place in the history of the champions of humane causes.

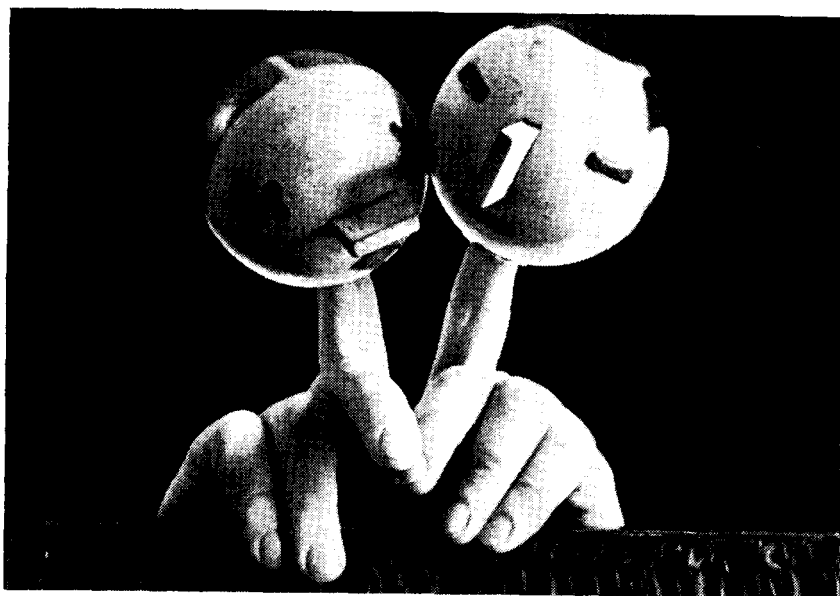
All our readers will be glad to congratulate Andrew Rothstein upon the award of an honorary doctorate by Moscow University, a tribute richly deserved.

No doubt everyone will join in wishing to congratulate our President, D. N. Pritt, QC, on the publication of the third and final volume of his autobiography. For his life's task as guardian of freedom and protection by law, his name will be remembered in faraway corners of the world and in Europe his name is synonymous with resistance to oppression. Surely he can look back over his life with the satisfaction of a man who has sacrificed opportunities of wealth and prestige to fight much harder battles which even to win meant disfavour at the time. We in the Society must be grateful that in our more difficult days he should have been so active and must rejoice that his persistent work for Anglo-Soviet relations has prospered.

Sergei Obraztsov and the English Puppeteers

An open discussion. Interpreter: ANNA BARR

Verbatim report from The Toynbee Theatre, after the performances on September 11, 1966



The hands of Sergei Obraztsov

Present: Sergei Obraztsov, John Wright of the Little Angel Theatre, Jan Bussell and Ann Hogarth of the Hogarth Puppets, and Eric Bramall's marionettes from the Harlequin Theatre, Colwyn Bay.

QUESTION: I want to ask Mr. Obraztsov whether the string puppet or marionette is going to die out in Russia and the East European countries? In this country it is still the puppet which most people work on, but in those countries it seems to be becoming rarer and rarer.

SERGEI OBRAZTSOV: This evening we saw very interesting puppets on strings. In West Germany there are very interesting puppets. I have no right to say that puppets on strings are dying out. I don't think you can say this about any type of puppet. The question is whether this form is utilised

correctly. If the puppet on strings is used to perform large plays imitating the human theatre as you have seen, that is bad, not because they are on strings but because they are performing that which they should not perform. Each form of art needs to tell the truth according to its own rules otherwise you can do silly things. If you paint just to represent exactly what you see so accurately that a photograph could do it, then that would be stupid, but it would not mean that painting is dying out. It means that it has to work within its own limits and not perform anything else. Thus when puppets are on fingers and perform whole operas—I saw such puppets in Holland—I was just sorry for the puppets. (Laughter.) That doesn't mean that puppets on fingers are dying out. In this case it was the opera that was dying out, that's all.

QUESTION: I've heard so much about the Russian theatre for children, and about the work done for children, but Mr. Obratsov gave us an adult's performance. I would like to know how much puppetry for adults is possible in Russia as opposed to youth work.

SERGEI OBRATSOV: Puppets are a form of theatrical art. The theatre is a form of art. All art concerns both adults and children. You can have literature for adults—literature for children. You can have paintings for adults, paintings for children. You can perform dramatic plays for adults and for children. It's just the same with puppets, you can have them for adults and for children. The whole question is what ideas you put into the particular performance and what methods you use. If you use methods that are not understood by children that would be very bad. If you show adults those things that don't interest them that will also be bad. In our country we have a hundred State Puppet Theatres. Beside that we have a School Amateur Puppet Theatre. We do not have puppet theatres which perform only for adults, and we haven't so many theatres which perform both for adults and for children. Our own theatre performs both for adults and for children and we divide our repertoire into three parts. For small children of five to eight or nine years, then for the older age groups from ten to fourteen years approximately. Then for adults. For the very small children we never put on anything frightening because art is a very powerful thing and you always have to know that art can bring very much good and very much harm. You have to be as careful with it as a doctor has to be with medicine. This particularly applies to children because art penetrates right into the heart and from the heart to the head, and children's hearts are very brittle, they are just like Venetian glass. They are very beautiful, you have to be very careful with them. You can wound the child's heart. Some of you may not agree with me but I think that Little Red Riding Hood is not suitable for the puppet theatre for the small child. The puppet is alive. Even if the cat is green, they will still think it's alive. It moves. A small child cannot bear the thought of the wolf eating a little girl and then the grandmother. For the child it is much more terrifying than the tragedy of King Lear is for adults. The child will cry, and every mother knows that if she shows her child a picture book with frightening pictures the child covers the picture up with his hand. The picture doesn't move but the puppets live. So you mustn't show little children frightening things. Nobody has to eat anybody else up, or kill anybody else, or even beat anybody. Even with funny things you have to

be careful because you have to know that laughter is sometimes harmful and sometimes does good. If the hero of a children's play stammers, the children will laugh. The theatre will do two harmful things at the same time. First it will upset that little boy or girl who suffers from this disability and who will cry, but, even worse, it will teach other children to laugh at another's misfortune. I'm just giving you this example. Up to the age of five, children don't go to the theatre because it is too much for them. They can't sit for two hours for when sitting under such a strain they get distracted and the play wouldn't do them any good. But from the age of five they come to us. We show them very bright and very funny things. They come to us every day. The older children like romantic plays. The hero has to be brave. It might even be frightening but the hero must always be good. We perform Kipling's Mowgli. We perform Aladdin. We mainly perform satirical plays. Before we perform a play we think to ourselves. For whom? And why? And if to these two questions there are suitable answers, then we perform the play.

QUESTION: Mr. Obratzov has dealt with the subject very exhaustively but I do feel there is one point which I might mention that has been brought before me, i.e. that children are most frightened by things with which they are associated, but others you can show with impunity. I believe such things as gun fights, volcanic eruptions, things with which children are not familiar will not really seriously frighten them. The point was put before me by somebody who did an investigation for Television. If you show children a play giving a detail in which children are interested, say children pricking others with a pin, they will be terrified, but if you show them something with which they are not familiar it will not be so.

SERGEI OBRAZTSOV: If there's a volcanic eruption of course it's not very frightening if there wasn't a house on top of this mountain! (Laughter.)

QUESTION: I would like to return to the original question concerning whether string puppetry was doomed to die out. Well I was suggesting that it might be dying in Russia, though it certainly isn't in this country.

JAN BUSSELL: I didn't think quite that because this evening we have had an opportunity of seeing some of the most brilliant string puppetry that can possibly be seen. It was entertaining. It was wonderfully manipulated, it was absolutely expert. I would like to know the opinion of the manipulator of what I am going to say about it. I was trying to see on what level I could judge both the string manipulator and Mr. Obratzov's puppetry. I wonder whether they would meet at any particular point. I wonder what the manipulator would say about this. I came to the conclusion that the strength of the string puppetry lay almost wholly in the expert manipulation, whereas in Mr. Obratzov's puppetry somehow the puppets were given a life of their own that rejects the manipulator. They could almost be judged as individuals breathing and even bleeding. Now I came to the conclusion therefore that string puppetry has a more limited field than the unlimited field of Mr. Obratzov's puppetry though I will say that it is the most brilliant thing I have ever seen in that field. I was wondering what the string puppeteer would say about that.

ERIC BRAMALL: Well, the only thing I can say is that naturally I like

to be thought of as an artist but I am primarily concerned with earning a living and therefore I suppose the choice of things that I show relies to a great extent on the type of thing that I think will attract audiences to my theatre. I thought tonight when I was invited that I would probably be the 'pop' artist on the bill and my art is mainly designed to bring people to my theatre to take the money off them. We know the kind of people that we are playing to. We try not to play down to them. We try to elevate them. We are playing to ordinary everyday holiday makers. At the same time I find it difficult to think of the marionette in terms of high art, simply because I'm not in a position to experiment in this field. I think there are those in this country that do experiment in this field and probably do it much better than I but I can't really find a link between marionettes and glove puppets which I suppose is what you are asking really, isn't it?

JAN BUSSELL: Now may I pipe in here. I have very strong views on this subject and about two and a half minutes to express them.— I believe there is a very strong link between all types of puppetry. Because tonight you have seen a very brilliant exponent of the cabaret type of puppet with strings, it does not mean at all that string puppets cannot act a part. Now the link is that in each case if the manipulator is feeling that part and acting that part he can put that feeling, that characterisation, into his glove puppet or into his string puppet or into his shadow puppet, whatever types he uses through his own personality: that is the essence of puppetry. It is acting a part and extending yourself through the strings or the rods or the levers into the puppet. The puppet becomes an extra side of your own personality and that is the link. You have seen this evening that with string puppets you can do practically anything given this power and the feeling plus the written word and the part and the acting ability. I am quite sure you can get a ready and immediate response, a personal response with strings and with gloves.

QUESTION: I just would add something. The link between strings and gloves on the fingers is that both have the soul in the hands. I want to ask Mr. Obratsov if he would explain the limits he mentions. I want to ask him what is the right way to use puppets.

SERGEI OBRATSOV: Between puppets on strings and puppets on hands and puppets on rods there is a lot in common because they are all puppets and not people. None of it is 'live' but portrays life. Puppets show in their own life what one could not portray in any other way. If an actor sits down and crosses his legs you get no reaction. If a puppet on strings sits down and crosses its legs, there's applause! Why? (Laughter.) And if a puppet on the hand sits down and puts one leg across the other, there's applause! Why? Because things that are not alive have opened up in life things which the thing that is alive can't open up within itself. A person can portray another person— I can perhaps portray Jan Bussell, (laughter) but I can't portray Obratsov because I am Obratsov and a man cannot portray a personal image because he is a person. We saw today puppets walked along the street just as if they were people . . . walking. They were just on sticks and still they portrayed people. A

puppet is also needed just as a fable is needed or a story. We have a song that everyone sings about a rowan tree which wants to change to an oak so that the wind will not blow her over. Everyone sings this song. What's this story about? Not about the rowan. No! It's about all girls who haven't yet found themselves a lover. And they have to find one because that's why they are girls. It's a good song about girls—English, Scottish, Russian, French and so on. This is what a puppet does. In other words, it portrays all people. Of course it has limits. If it expresses all girls then it succeeds. But if it wants to play one of Chekhov's characters, then it will do it badly because it has a frontier. But is it bad? Art has barriers always. If it had no barrier there would not be much success, because without them one goes apart and spreads just like water does. And that's why the barriers of our art are understandable and the power of the puppet is known and understood. Without these symbols people have never lived. There have never been lives without fable or folk tales or songs or games. With such long associations strength becomes stronger. . . .

The discussion then terminated, time allowed for use of the theatre having expired, and after enthusiastic applause for all the puppeteers, glove, rods and strings, the audience continued the debate as they left, many seeking the opportunity of a personal chat with the experts.

S.J.

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Children's Theatre in the Soviet Union

By Lesley Seyd and Ted Parker

A CHILD'S WORLD . . . Discussion between Ted Parker, Technical Director of the Unicorn Theatre and Lesley Seyd who runs a Drama Centre in a Children's Library, Borough of Camden, London.

L.S.: It was evening when we arrived in Moscow and went out for our first glimpse of Red Square. Quite soon those of us who dream of Children's Theatre in Britain felt that we had woken up in one of our own plays.

Until you have been there it is hard to imagine a country of over 200 million people whose children never see a horror comic, where sex and violence are never presented with what one of our party calls 'lip-smacking' sadism, where they can see their own Theatre, Ballet, Opera Puppets and Films at prices ranging from 2s. 6d. to 6s. a seat. It can only happen in a country where they have their priorities right, where they start by asking 'What is good for children?' . . . and then get on with the job of providing it to the best of their ability.

One can argue till Doomsday about what is, and what is not 'good' . . . and this they do, with the children joining in. We might not always agree with them, there are bound to be a few differences but the important thing is that the basis is there, the understanding and the will to make vast sums of money available for the Arts in the education and life of the Soviet child.

Theatre in the USSR is not something children go to just as a Christmas or New Year treat. It seems to be woven into the whole fabric of their lives and yet it is no less exciting because they can go quite often. Would you agree with this, Ted?

T.P.: Yes, indeed. The children we saw in the Central Theatre for Children in Moscow behaved like experienced theatre-goers but they were obviously excited and absorbed by the plays.

The Central, which is near the Bolshoi in the heart of Theatreland, is one of the older types of theatres but is very suitable for children. The decor is quiet, the atmosphere homely and the auditorium (already full when we arrived), is one of those which, fortunately, make it easy for the actors to establish contact with the audience.'

L.S.: . . . as the two Story-tellers did in the first play.

T.P.: Yes! Immediately they came on stage the atmosphere was electric.

L.S.: Another feature I liked was the management of short episodic scenes in both plays which made it full of the sort of variety young children enjoy.

T.P.: The scenery itself was heavy and soft looking, the painting a bit rough by our best standards perhaps, though this may have been due to wear and tear from constant use. The acting of this company was really charming, precise and contained, especially noticeable in the second play which was about animal characters such as the wonderful little hedgehog and a huge clumsy bear . . . one of the 'baddies' but very endearing all the same. We were a bit startled by seeing a most convincing wolf eating

the goat with loud crunching of bones, but he was too amusing to frighten the children seriously and the play ended happily with the goat appearing in the auditorium to reassure them.

L.S.: I wish you or I had seen their play for teenagers. Marjorie Sigley said it was the best thing she saw for young people during the whole visit. She commented on the quality of the acting and on the subject which concerned a clash between facing facts honestly and 'principles' which did not fit them.

L.S.: We were all very curious to see the Children's Opera because we had heard so much from you and others about the Director, Madame Natalia Sachs, and because I agree with her that Children's Theatre should ideally include music and dance. But I was a little disappointed with the production we saw of 'The Snow Maiden'. I thought it rather old fashioned and stiff.

T.P.: Remember that the Children's Opera is only a few years old. There were charming things in this play, the animals of course, and the



Mme M. I. Knebel (centre) and Mr. K. Ya. Shakh-Azizov (centre standing), directors of the Central Children's Theatre in Moscow; Miss Pearl Binder (sitting next to Mme Knebel) and Miss Marjorie Sigley (standing behind Miss Binder)—leaders of the SCR group; Soviet actors and members of the SCR group

wicked sister . . . the stage came alive when she was on . . . and the bass, Father Frost, who had a most commanding presence. . . .

L.S.: . . . and really superb make-up! Oh, yes, and of course there

are very few people in any Opera company, or Music Academy who have really tackled this difficult question of acting in Opera.

T.P.: Madame Sachs understands this better than most people and you remember she told us that they are in the process of studying the whole question of children's opera, with special attention to the methods used by Benjamin Britten. She said there are five new ones being written, including one by Shostakovitch.

It is also a handicap, I think that they do not have a specially designed theatre of their own. This one, in an old building is not really suitable. The auditorium which has been modernised and elegantly decorated in the smartest contemporary fashion seemed far too vast, there was very little chance of rapport between the singers and the children, especially in the case of the heroine who did not get across too well (though this was partly a question of her style and training as a singer). But the suitability



A scene from Marshak's Fairy Tales at the Central Children's Theatre in Moscow

of a theatre is not so much a question of size as of design and decor. The Kirov Theatre, in Leningrad, where I saw a morning performance of Ballet for children, is far larger, but infinitely more friendly and intimate and the rapport between audience and the stage was electric.

L.S.: Leningrad also has the best designed theatre for children I have seen.

T.P.: The Theatre of the Young Spectator . . . a modern rectangular building set in a Park. Yes, it is really most impressive, with a portico, lots of glass and an immense staircase leading to vast foyers and refreshment bars . . . but it is not in the least overpowering, the atmosphere is ideal.

On entry, the auditorium is exciting. It is steeply raked and curved to a stage at ground level, 'open' for this production, dressed only with a white chevron-shaped ramp pointing towards the audience well out on to the apron. The stage was covered with a blue-black stage cloth, the wings were one shade of blue, the back cloth another, with a simple white design representing a mathematical formula, high up, as if on a blackboard. Inside the ramp there was a low rostrum on truck rollers set with furnishings for the first scene. Changes were effected simply and quickly with one truck rolling off into the wings and a different one coming on from the other side, with the next scene set.

The seating, made of pressed plywood, was very comfortable, surprisingly so as it was without arms so that, although this theatre holds a thousand, small children can sit up close if room is needed for more.

A young girl sat near us, with her father. As she was reading *Pinocchio* in English, we asked her to explain the play to us. She told us that it was about the love stories and work of young people who have left school and cannot decide what to do with their lives. It ended amusingly, with the serious leading boy (he was an actor aged only 17), and the girl dancing, modern style, to some sort of pop music.

During the interval our friends insisted on treating us to refreshments and we went to look at a number of display cases in the foyer, with models of stage sets.

L.S.: I thought these models gave one a very good idea of the flexibility of this theatre, especially of the variety of acting areas and levels, and the many different entrances and exits.

T.P.: This was evident too when we saw three plays there for younger children, the next day. The first was Pushkin's well-known tale of the Golden Fish. This was, perhaps, the least interesting of the three and the Fish was far too mature, but the way they managed the water was attractive, with two lines of girls moving smoothly and rhythmically, with two banners of blue material floating across their arms to stimulate waves.

The next play was about a naughty Sea Urchin. It was great fun, bright and lively and the children loved it.

L.S.: Both this and the last play. . . . 'The Priest and His Servants' were full of humour and ingenuity. It would take a book to describe the production in detail, but we must mention the lovely caricature of a Pantomime horse, so simple but hilariously funny, and the Coach which looked as if it was moving though it didn't budge an inch. We all commented I think on the absence of cat-calls and whistles when a scantily dressed slave girl appeared on stage, in spite of the large number of children, including young boys, in the audience!

We were shown all over this theatre . . . I hope they realised how impressed we were by it and by their work.

They have 15 plays in repertoire, catering for four different age groups from seven years old, to 17, and they do four new plays each year. They have a company of 60 to 65 actors, 18 to 20 musicians and 200 front of house and backstage staff. There are two Producers who consult with the

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Central Institute of Dramatic Art and Theatre Design, when they want to work on the decor of a play.

Links with the schools are close. This theatre, like others, has five teachers on its staff. Children can become 'Friends of the Theatre' and love to make collections for their Theatre Museums. When they have been to see a play, they discuss it on getting back to school. They also have their own plays at school, as our children do, and at the Play Centres.

At the Theatre of the Young Spectator in Moscow, the prominent poet and playwright, Sergei Mikhaikhov, said . . . 'A play begins to live its second life when the children take it to school!'

T.P.: He was very interesting . . . and so was his play which we saw when we got back to Moscow. 'The Cowardly Tale,' is a modern fable written so that it appeals to adults as it does to children. The characters are human with animal characteristics, involved in a simple adventure story which, on a deeper level, is satirical and full of topical allusions.

It opens, dramatically, with a storm. Peals of thunder roll through the theatre on canned organ music; lightning flashes on a screen. As the storm subsides lighting comes up on a bedroom scene downstage, with two cheerful hares putting pyjamas on over their day clothes as they prepare for the night, talking ten to the dozen. Then they burrow through the foot of the bed, under the blankets, and go to sleep.

A revolve takes this scene away and we next see an aeroplane waiting for passengers. They soon arrive, the two hares, one of whom decides, after long thought, not to risk the flight, a Marmalade Tom-Cat chased by a burly bull-dog in a tight sporty jacket and bowler hat puffing a cigar between growls. There are a pair of intellectual-looking goats and a wonderful pig in a tight-fitting pink velvet dress, making odious but entertaining piggy noises.

They get into the plane. The stage revolves again and we see 'hem inside. Disaster has struck! The pilot has passed out and the plane, out of control, is lurching about alarmingly . . . it may crash any minute and there is only one parachute. Who is brave enough to jump, and get help? No one . . . till the Tom-Cat bravely volunteers.

Act 2. Woodpeckers are manning a radio receiving station at the airport. They get distress signals from the plane and tap out messages with the long beaks on their bird-like hats, to tell the animals how to land. We see the inside of the plane on a sort of TV set. The hare has taken over and is at the controls, nervous but proud. When the crucial moment comes and they are about to land, we are back in the bedroom. One hare is asleep. He wakes to see the other sitting at the foot of the bed, legs dangling over the edge, clutching the rail as if it were the joystick! He has dreamt it all!

It was really a lovely play and held our attention every minute in spite of the fact that we could not follow the language. So we were very glad to meet the Author, Director, Assistant Designer and Cast afterwards. We had a long talk about the technique of acting animal parts because they have their own Studio for training actors and are clearly very good at it.

The Director said that he had played many animal parts himself . . . he had even played a tree. They all agreed that it is very exacting work playing to child audiences . . . the author said the actors were air sick when rehearsing the lurching plane! It demands a dedicated and enthusiastic professional company, and this is not too hard to find in the USSR as actors are paid the same for Children's as for Adult Theatre and authors are paid more. They have a far longer rehearsal time than our actors because in the UK of course our Theatre Managements have to find all their own expenses.

T.P.: The whole thing is made possible in the Soviet Union because they have their theatres given to them free . . . they pay not one kopeck of rent or rates!

L.S.: And half their whole Budget (which is sizeable) is provided by Government subsidy. We are agreed, I know, that good and truthful work is what matters most, but a well-equipped and suitable building is essential if the whole range of Theatre is to be tackled, and some plays demand an expensive production. If children are to give their best when they grow up, they must experience it when they are young in buildings which are set aside for their sole use. They understand this in the Soviet Union. Still more, they provide it, and it was a very great pleasure, for which we must thank many people, to have been able to see it.

Harold Ingham

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Cherkassov and Okhlopkov

by Marie Seton

Just as BBC 2 had planned an impressive memorial programme honouring Nikolai Cherkassov, death claimed his colleague, Nikolai Okhlopkov, who appears so happily exuberant as Alexander Nevsky's comrade in arms in the film which brought international fame to Cherkassov.

Brought together as actors by Eisenstein for *Alexander Nevsky*, the careers of these two Soviet artists differed sharply. Cherkassov was ever an actor. But for those whose memories reach back to the 1930s, Okhlopkov was most renowned as the theatre regisseur who out-Meyerhold Meyerhold while he had charge of the experimental Realistic Theatre, otherwise known as Moscow's Krasni Presni.

Cherkassov's beginnings and marked success as an actor who belonged to Leningrad, was as a player following in a strictly realistic, or naturalistic vein reflective of the theories and traditions stemming from the Stanislavsky school. Even when young Cherkassov was a character actor. In the sharpest contrast, Okhlopkov, like Eisenstein in the 1920s, set himself the daring task of breaking away from conventional or traditional styles of play production. It is true to say that he was the first stage director to base his theatre on what subsequently came to be known in the United States as Theatre in the Round.

Okhlopkov's Realistic Theatre of the early 1930s eliminated any permanent stage. The proscenium arch had vanished altogether. He used the entire theatre area for playing. His method was to construct temporary stages of different dimensions and numbers to suit each play he produced. The audience were dotted about between these stages in blocks of seats which could be moved and rearranged for each production. In short, the audience sat in the midst of the play's action. Okhlopkov's theory was that by this means the audience was drawn into the closest participation and identification with the content of the plays. The three or four productions I saw in his theatre were exceedingly dynamic, so much so that individual scenes remain etched on my memory after more than thirty years.

I remember seeing his production of Gorky's *Mother*. To a certain extent the concept owed something to cinema. As I recall, he used seven different stages scattered about the theatre. Some were larger and others smaller. The scenes flowed from stage to stage and always vividly lit. The content made its impact while the properties used by actors were very few. It was a very modern theatre in its day.

One of the most successful plays running in Moscow was Pogodin's *Friends*. It had been produced in a strictly realistic manner. While it was in the current repertory, Okhlopkov took this play and produced it in his own experimental manner which was an utterly different conception. Thus, it was possible to see two diametrically opposite styles of production in Moscow at the same time. This was very exciting theatrically.

Okhlopkov was to the marrow of his bones an experimental artist. The proof of this is that towards the end of his life he returned once more to the direction of a new experimental theatre linking back and carrying on the

work he had first done at the Realistic Theatre. As a person, he was the embodiment of an exuberant spirit. The tremendous zest that he brings to his character in *Alexander Nevsky* was part of his own personality. All those who met him were charmed by his expansiveness, enthusiasm and warmth. He was essentially a daring spirit who delighted in innovation.

The first time I saw a performance by Cherkassov, or at least a portrayal that sharply etched itself into my mind, was in the film *Baltic Deputy*. In years, Cherkassov was rather young but he completely sank all impression of youth and of his good looks into the tall round-shouldered old professor with dangling moustache. He appeared a genuine seventy. It was a wonderful performance.

The fact was that this performance had so impressed me with its relation to the Stanislavsky tradition. I found myself totally astonished the first time I saw *Alexander Nevsky*. Eisenstein had already produced a marked transformation in Cherkassov. This had nothing to do with the fact that now one was seeing Cherkassov portraying a man of his own physical age; or that one could judge his looks. It was the change in acting style. Cherkassov, the actor who had built up characters through very small and subtle gestures and facial expressions, now acted in an enlarged, simplified manner. I have always thought of *Alexander Nevsky* as in the nature of pageant opera.

Up to this time, Eisenstein had never been interested in directing professional actors. He had used types, mainly. As I understand, even in *Nevsky* he did not concentrate very hard on directing his actors. Others, including Grigory Alexandrov, his former assistant, sometimes took a hand. This cannot have been very easy for Cherkassov as an actor. Yet he shed his former highly personal style of acting and emerged as the epitome of a broad-gestured, handsome and bold hero.

Subsequently, with his acceptance of the role of Ivan Grosny in Eisenstein's monumental last work, Cherkassov took on by far the hardest task in the whole of his career as an actor. The work went on from year to year and took an enormous toll of Cherkassov as a man. He was, I believe, worn out when Part 2 was completed in 1946. What finally emerged was an extraordinary characterisation cast in a stylised manner with almost every facial expression and gesture emphatically registered almost in slow motion. Eisenstein conceived the character of Ivan in every detail. He made innumerable drawings of every expression, the bend of Ivan's back; his transformation from child to youth, from youth to agonised middle age. Eisenstein moulded Ivan down to the smallest detail and bent Cherkassov into this remarkable preconceived mould, working and working until he achieved exactly the effect he sought.

In Eisenstein's Director's Notes on *Ivan the Terrible*, he describes many things about his methods with Cherkassov. He says he thought of Ivan and the actor as Japanese paper flowers that open when dropped into water. Reading Eisenstein on Ivan, one feels the great strain of his own vision being imposed on the once naturalistic actor Nikolai Cherkassov. It must have been a gruelling experience for Cherkassov and the relationship between director and actor can only have been extremely difficult, especially as the personality of Cherkassov was in itself extremely strong and positive. Yet what one can only conclude was a period of personal suffering for Cherkassov gave the world one of the most unique films and a performance by an actor

which is unforgettable. The price was high but so was the reward, that of having contributed sweat, blood and tears to a film that has become immortal.

No doubt, Cherkassov must have experienced the utmost relief and release of his own inherent actor's powers when he came to approach the film *Don Quixote*, directed by Grigori Kozintsev in Cherkassov's home studio of Lenfilm. This is perhaps the film which should stand as the most personal memorial to Cherkassov's art as an actor. It is a great portrayal, exceeding in depths and shades of emotion—from the comic to the tragic—that of Fedor Chaliapin who had played the quixotic Knight of Cervantes' novel in the earlier film version directed by G. B. Pabst. In the role, Cherkassov succeeded in creating a marvellous blend of the comic, foolish, ludicrous with a serious and deeply moving pathos. He projected a human psychological freak without a touch of caricature or exaggeration. Only a great actor with a feel for human nature could have created such a convincing character.

Like his colleague, Okhlopkov, Cherkassov himself was an expansive and amusing person. I only met him once. It was at the Film Festival in Brussels where *Ivan the Terrible*, Part 2, was world premiered. He sat with a table full of people, including Kozintsev and myself, and entertained us all with delightful actor stories. His sense of humour was large and he was a star figure thoroughly enjoying himself.

Two very memorable personalities have gone with the death of Cherkassov and Okhlopkov. Opposite in approach to drama and acting, each had a touch of the folk hero about them, each suggested something a little larger than ordinary life.

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A Moscow Diary

By Robert Daglish

THE RE-DISCOVERY OF FALK

In 1962 Ehrenburg wrote in his memoirs, 'Books of verse that would not have been published ten years ago are now appearing; modern buildings are going up. Yet Falk's canvases still stand face to the wall.'

Time, however, has worked in Falk's favour. In 1965, an exhibition of about eighty of his pictures was held in Armenia. Last November a larger show was put on in Moscow. Crowds queued for hours in Begovaya Street to see paintings that had not been on view in Moscow for thirty years (the exhibition at the time of Falk's death was a tiny affair). Many viewers expressed surprise that this work could ever have been dubbed 'formalist'. Admittedly, there are signs of Cubist influence in Falk's earlier work, but Cubist treatment is used to give greater depth and never becomes an end in itself.

Robert Falk was a member of the 'Jack of Diamonds' group of Russian artists (the others were Konchalovsky, Rozhdestvensky, Kuprin, Mashkov and Lentulov) who joined forces in 1910 to fight the aestheticism and imitative traditions of Academic art. The group sought inspiration in commonplace things, which they were determined to paint in a new way. They wanted closer connections with the West, particularly the French school, and such artists as Matisse contributed paintings to several exhibitions that the group held in Russia. They welcomed the revolution and many of them, Falk included, seized the opportunity of teaching art to the new circles that the revolution had admitted to culture.

At the exhibition I was lucky enough to be able to talk to Falk's widow, Angelina Shechekin-Krotova, and afterwards visited her flat, two attic rooms overlooking Moscow River, where Falk worked from 1938 till his death. She told me that by 1928 Falk had become so deeply involved in teaching and public affairs that he felt he must go abroad to 'make a fresh start.' He went to Paris and worked there for ten years, holding several successful exhibitions and living on the occasional sale of a picture. Most of his paintings, however, he kept to take back with him to Russia, which he actually did in the grim year of 1937. His decision to return was all the more remarkable since the prominent French dealer Vollard had that very year offered him a large exhibition and sale of his pictures. Had he accepted, he would no doubt have achieved fame abroad instead of the obscurity at home to which the critics of the forties condemned him. But Falk bravely preferred home.

Not all of Falk's pictures are immediately impressive, though his portraits (often in a period costume that the subject's character had suggested; he did his son as a young man from a Dickensian novel) are nearly always striking. Just as the impressionists had a new awareness of the physical properties of light, so Falk tried to convey the physical properties of matter as they are understood today, in modern physics, and his landscapes and still-lives do seem to vibrate with an inner motion. In spite of his ten years in Paris he was singularly uninfluenced by fashionable tendencies. Cézanne remained his ideal, though he never imitated him, and Falk's Paris landscapes have an unconventional sombreness that, in retrospect at least, we can associate with the years before the débacle.

I spent several hours with Mrs. Falk and I am deeply grateful to her for her explanations. There are hundreds of pictures in their flat, many of which the public has yet to see. She had been busy preparing canvases and catalogue for a fresh exhibition to be held early this year at the scientific centre in Novosibirsk. The scientists of this country (they form a larger proportion of the population than anywhere else) are rapidly becoming the patrons of art and one is constantly hearing of unusual exhibitions being organised at research institutes and the like. It is fitting that this fine artist, whose path was so difficult, should now be recognised by them.

YOUNG ARTISTS

The exhibition of the work of young artists held in the new exhibition rooms on Kuznetsky Most over the New Year was an enjoyable experience. There were no abstracts and no action painting, but there was something that to my mind is more valuable—a freshness of approach and an interest in new styles and subjects that, although imitative in some cases, seemed to many besides myself completely sincere.

In one of the rooms there was a large bronze called *Girl running across the waves*, by Gorbanov. Inspired by Alexander Grin's story of the sea wraith, it seemed with its broad hips and attenuated head to owe something to Henry Moore. Nazarenko's painting of *Boys in Bukhara* showed a notable awareness of rhythm. This sense of rhythm was also outstanding in such small but interesting canvases as Zebek's *Fishing port* and *Sails* and in much of the black-and-white work. Excursions into the history of long ago were numerous (there was a fascinating etching of Peter I with scenes from his reign woven into a pattern round him); and there were none of those dull illustrations of meetings and processions that were so much in evidence in previous years.

There were some grim and unbiased reflections on war and on the arms race (a masked and overalled mother with a masked baby at her breast entitled *Atomic Madonna*). We were also reminded once again of the German massacre of Jews at Baby Yar. This subject, though disapproved of by some critics when Yevtushenko introduced it in poetry and Shostakovich wrote a symphony round it four years ago, has now re-emerged both in literature and art; last autumn Anatoly Kuznetsov published an immensely powerful documentary of his Kiev childhood under the same title.

Humour popped up in a triptych by Stulyev, depicting amorous scenes from country life in crude colours with slogans such as 'Love and friendship for ever' scrawled across the top. And Voskressenskaya's small figure in wood, *Why don't you come to see me?*, expressed that ebullient, high-breasted sex that the peasant girls of Ryazan seem to be famous for. There was other more serious work in wood that showed a fine mastery of the material and the possibilities of grain.

There were several nude bathing scenes, one of them, *Sun, water and air*, distinctly pleasing to the eye, and in some of the interiors, *Our kitchen*, for instance, there was an almost Matisse-like appreciation of colour.

An interest in people as individuals seemed to have ousted static crowd scenes and the faces of Popkov's *Memories* (a gathering of old women in a log hut) were very moving. Several paintings showed a revival of interest in the methods of the old icon-painters.

During the exhibition a public discussion was held at which much was

said about the freshness of the work submitted by artists who had had no academic training. The very next day I was able to discuss this with professors at the Surikov Higher Institute of Art, which is one of the two major centres of art teaching in the country and now comes under the direct control of the Academy.

The Surikov Institute accepts about 50 pupils a year on a competitive basis and most of its 350 pupils have completed an intermediate art school before entering the institute. The course lasts six years, in either sculpture or painting, one of the studios of the painting department being devoted entirely to theatre decoration. Instruction is given by such established sculptors and painters as Tomsky, Manizer, Teplakov, Pokarzhevsky and Mochalsky.

It was Professor Mochalsky, head of the department of painting, who undertook to outline the principles on which the institute bases its instruction.

We do not confine ourselves as they do in Italy and France, he said, to providing pupils only with the technical ability to express themselves. We try to influence the direction of their ideas, to interest them in life and events; we encourage them to go out and paint people and nature as they actually see them and not to spend too much time studying reproductions. Every pupil does, in fact, spend two months of the year on practical work outside the institute, in places as far apart as Daghestan, Komi and the Crimea. This was the only way, Mochalsky told me, to avoid the eclecticism which he saw as the main fault of the exhibition I have been describing.

His view was that the freshness of the untrained artist might have a momentary appeal but such artists tended only to repeat themselves year after year, while the artist whose innate abilities had been professionally developed could really grow. Like many Soviet writers on art, Mochalsky mentioned the word 'life' several times and he evidently saw professional skill and an eye for what is going on in the world as an antidote for the situation in the West where, he told us, someone can wrap up a motor-cycle in polythene, put a bow on the top and get it exhibited in Paris as a work of art.

Whatever one may think of some of the work these professors themselves produced in past years one cannot say the opinions they express today are unreasonable. It is a fact, however, that many students of art prefer to attend less solid establishments, such as the theatre department of the State Institute of Cinematography, where they feel more free to develop.

Trends in Soviet Art Today—(1)

by Laurence H. Bradshaw

When I arrived back from the Soviet Union about three months ago I was asked by my artist friends, what is the real position relating to freedom in the arts and are the artists allowed to express themselves in any style they choose, as in the West? While I was there, one of the things I went out of my way to investigate was the position of the experimental artists and I came to the conclusion, after visiting many of their studios, that they are free to experiment and develop along their own lines in a way similar to artists in Western Europe and this they are doing with great distinction. There is no slavish imitation of styles and mannerisms in order to be *avant-garde*, but a fundamental desire to search after and grasp the ideas and philosophy

that is the core of the contemporary movement. This striving to understand gives their work depth and significance.

I also gained the impression that many intellectuals were very interested in problems relating to contemporary art. The architects, engineers and scientists were definitely giving progressive artists patronage by purchasing their works and, in the case of architects, commissioning them to experiment with modern decorative schemes which are becoming increasingly popular in the new cities and towns. I saw some interesting experiments in this direction around Volgograd, in many ways similar to the Mexican artist's decorative projects.

Time has now become a major factor. If we are to cope with the increase in population together with a higher standard of living the designers and artists involved in gigantic construction schemes have of necessity to evolve new techniques, for they are working in a new media and at new speeds, with new tools and materials that demand completely different procedures.

Outside Volgograd a collection of wooden bungalows, erected to house the workers employed on the construction of the great new dam and hydro-electric power station that provides one-fifth of the total electric power of the USSR, is growing into a satellite town. It is being built according to the most contemporary ideas of planning and design and there I met, at the architects' club, a group of painters and sculptors who are collaborating with the engineers and the chief architect, a woman, in this enterprise and from what I saw of their work it looks as if they are going to make Voljsky a very interesting town. They are using contemporary materials of all kinds, coloured plastics and synthetic resins and are adapting them to the new requirements and techniques.

I also found the USSR artists and intellectuals were interested in British art and although they don't like everything in the Tate Gallery they would like to see more of some of our younger painters' and sculptors' work. One man whose art they respect is Henry Moore.

Some of the politicians, as far as I could judge, were adopting a decidedly more sympathetic attitude and the experiments in the studios go forward unimpeded. The recent official exhibitions of the works of Manzu and Picasso's drawings show a broadening approach. It was not until I read in the papers that the first semi-public exhibition by a group of modernist Russian painters had been forcibly closed that I realised I may have taken too much for granted. But I have also noticed that there has been quite a lot of free and reasonable discussion in the press around this issue and *Pravda* has asserted that on these controversial subjects there are two definite points of view to be considered.

There is a great deal of interest among people in the towns and cities in exhibitions of modern art. I witnessed long queues, in the early morning when it was really cold, waiting to be admitted to an exhibition of works by Hans Falk.

Neizvestny, the man so many people thought was in official disfavour, is now gaining recognition as an important sculptor. In the February 3, 1967, issue of *Soviet Weekly* there is a long interview with Neizvestny who tells his life story and there is an interesting discussion between the interviewer and the artist, which throws a completely new light on his status and the position he has attained within the USSR. I hope this attitude will persist as we in Britain and Western Europe have witnessed so much suppression and official

condemnation of art and literature, which in the end does more harm than good to everybody.

The artist should not be in servitude to the past and have to follow in the footsteps of a bygone age and its culture and traditions. Surely all civilisations grow out of the historical circumstances of their times and the physical conditions and necessities of the period in which they develop. Culture from another age and race with a vastly different historical background cannot just be grafted on to the social needs and conditions of the scientific 20th century.

Art values change, they are not eternal to be repeated again and again out of context. The truly creative artist cannot be governed by edicts. This is an age that has to solve many problems in every sphere and the artists and writers are among those most deeply involved, almost as much as the scientists, economists, industrialists and agriculturalists.

For centuries the clergy ruled the arts. From the time of Sumar and Egypt style in art was a formalism fixed by the ideological necessities of the State and Church. It wasn't until Greco-Roman and Byzantine influences had passed that the artists were able to work out their own individual solutions to aesthetic problems and devise an individual art form that could express their ideas and emotions. In the West it was not until the Gothic period that art began to become independent in the sense that the artist-craftsman was able to improvise and invent his own imagery, which was of course dependent to a great extent on folk art and ecclesiastic conventions and symbolism. From this time on the artist was much freer from restrictive, ideological subjection and dogma and the aesthetic formalism of the Greco-Roman schools, and was able to develop a more dynamic and expressive, humanist imagery. Just as the Gothic style was formulated by the craftsmen-artists and the carpenter-architects, I saw in Russia similar close collaborations and judged from this that there is definitely an enlarging vision and new concepts in the field of aesthetics, town planning and social hygiene.

In Leningrad I was able to go over the Mukhina Art School and had a long talk with Mr. Yakov Lukin the Director, who showed me many examples of industrial design resulting from close collaboration between sculptors and engineers. This joint workshop method has been applied to solve all kinds of problems from agricultural machinery to everyday objects in common usage that can be mass produced. I was impressed with the high standard of their work and was also interested to hear that they are in contact and have friendly relations with the staff of our Royal College of Art, South Kensington.

While in Moscow I visited the studio of Neizvestny and had a long talk with him. He explained to me some of the difficulties he experienced in the past but he now thinks the position of the non-academic artists to be much improved. He himself has been commissioned by the Italian Government to do two great folios of etchings, one set for Dante's *Divine Comedy* and the other for Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, both nearly completed. These are of extreme interest. Neizvestny's art shows great strength and versatility, but from time to time his genius has to draw new power and ideas from other artists and during this recent 'Dante' phase he derived quite a lot of sustenance from Salvador Dali. This doesn't mean that he is a derivative artist; this he is not in any sense of the word. He also is very interested in Henry Moore but this has had little influence on his sculpture.

He is an artist who has a number of literary friends, scholars, scientists, poets and journalists. At one time he aspired to become a poet and he starts a new work by first conceiving his ideas in a literary form before making models or drawings for his sculpture. He is essentially a cerebral artist. It is to be hoped that the many maquettes he has now in his studio for interesting and important projects will be carried out. But of course there are many artists and critics who are completely out of sympathy with his work.

Neizvestny, a loyal communist, finds himself, along with other experimental artists, opposed by many of the leading members of the Artists' Union and the Academy, many of whom, also communists, deliberately restrained their individual styles to fit in with the cultural needs of the majority of the workers in the Soviet Union from 1918 onwards and adopted the socialist realist doctrine. Many of the original progressive artists deliberately changed their allegiances from the advanced schools of 1905-1925 to the academic, in order to increase their power of communication, because in those early days just after the Revolution illiteracy was still very high and artists by the use of their skills were able to devise pictorial propaganda and communicate inspiring messages that were also educational. The power of this opposition can be judged by the closing down of the recent exhibition of contemporary art after only one day.

But before one becomes too partisan let us consider a news item of July 31, 1966, where the great City of Edinburgh also distinguished itself! A collection of Beardsley prints were ruled 'indecent' by a woman magistrate. The originals had been on public exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum but the whole collection of 73 prints were put under close arrest in Edinburgh and the firm who exhibited them for sale was fined £20 into the bargain.

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In My Own Field

by Aron Vergelis

Translated by Martin Lawrence

How did I appear on this field?

Has the field always been my home?

Like the corn that is springing up from green to golden.

Like the little worms and flowers,

Did I appear like them? No!

My birth was on a bed of nettles.

And I'm not sure whether this is the cause of my restless blood.

I will not use this before anybody

For the sake of vanity.

I grow in my own field. It is burdensome and good.

It is burdensome and good as the crops and grass around me.

What do I take from the field?

Is the field a root and mother source for me?

Like everything around me, I have my nest and wide world here.

I drink from the spring and do it no harm.

I am here under the sun, and in her shadow.

What do I give to the field?

Has my creative power grown up on the field?

While tilling the earth I have found traces of a camp

Which is a trustworthy witness to ancient times

When my forefathers toiled.

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Training of Orientalists in the USSR

by Professor Konstantin Tsereteli,
Tbilisi State University

Note by Professor David Marshall Lang,
Caucasian Studies University of London

The following article on the training of Orientalists and the organisation of Oriental studies in the Soviet Union is of special interest, as it is written by one of the leading experts on Semitics languages at Tbilisi State University.

My old friend Professor Konstantin Tsereteli has acquired a world reputation for his pioneer studies on contemporary Aramean and related dialects. One of his recent articles was published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*. Professor Tsereteli is active in the work of the *Georgian Society for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries*, which does so much to encourage cooperation between Soviet Orientalists and their colleagues abroad, particularly in England.

The article is of great value, since it contains a number of facts relating to work in progress and scientific personalities and institutions which are not available in published form elsewhere.

Soviet Oriental studies boast a venerable tradition. Long before the October Revolution of 1917, St. Petersburg (present Leningrad) enjoyed a high reputation as an important centre of Oriental studies, which thrived at the Oriental Faculty of the then metropolitan—University of St. Petersburg, notably in such fields as Arabic and Iranian studies, Indology and Sinology, Turkology and Mongolian studies, to say nothing of Armenology and Kartvelology (Georgian studies). Scholarly research at this centre went hand in hand with such purely teaching work as the production of texts and training of future Oriental scholars and specialists in Oriental languages. The names of such members of the St. Petersburg faculty of Orientalists as V. Rosen, the Arabist, K. Salemann, the Iranist, and D. Chwolson, the Hebraist, and others, are well known to Oriental scholars the world over; and their disciples, the academicians P. Kokovtsov, F. Scherbatsky, B. Turayev, V. Barthold, N. Marr, M. Alexeyev, I. Krachkovsky, V. Struve, and others, took an active part in the creation and development of the Soviet school of Oriental research.

In addition to St. Petersburg, Oriental scholars were trained also at the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages in Moscow (founded in 1814 for the promotion of Armenian studies; later reconstituted on a much broader basis; lately superseded by the Institute of Oriental Languages of the State University of Moscow) and at the Oriental Faculty of the University of Kazan. It was at the former that Professor A. Krymsky, the eminent Arabist and Slavist, began his teaching and academic career.

The October Revolution gave a powerful impetus to Oriental studies. New centres came into being in the capitals of most of the Union republics. Those of the alumni of the Moscow Institute and of the University of

Leningrad who came from Union republics, exerted every effort on their return home, to develop these new republican centres. In the republics of the Soviet East, i.e., of Transcaucasia and of Soviet Central Asia, an undeniable awareness has since developed of the special relevance to each republic of the study of its own history, language and literature. As a result, these branches of learning have, ever since the early 1920's, enjoyed the status of state-sponsored disciplines and figure prominently in the curricula of the secondary schools, training colleges, and universities of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, as also of Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, and those of the autonomous republics and districts whose population is of predominantly Eastern origin.

Significantly, it is at the respective departments of the republican universities, and not at their 'Oriental' faculties that the disciplines under discussion are studied. This, for instance, in the state universities of Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, the Azerbaijani, Uzbek, Tajik languages, though Oriental, are studied not at the Oriental but at the Philological Faculty. Hence the specific connotation of the phrase 'Oriental Studies,' as used in Soviet academic practice—implying as it does studies relating primarily to peoples and lands of the extra-Soviet East. Understandably, it is with the languages, history, literature, and national economies of these latter that the *Oriental* departments of the Transcaucasian and Central Asian Soviet republics, as well as the *Oriental* institutes of their Academies are primarily concerned.

The ever-widening scope of Oriental research—its special relevance to the ancient, medieval, modern, and current history of many of the Soviet Union's constituent republics should never be lost sight of—and the USSR's steadily growing contacts with nations of the extra-Soviet East are the two main factors which account for the increasingly expanding Soviet programme of training specialists in both Oriental research and Oriental languages.

In Moscow, the main centre of this work is the State University's Institute of Oriental Languages, established in 1956 with the object of meeting the country's mounting demand for a cadre of scholars conversant with a particular Oriental country, its language, literature, history, and national economy. The curriculum covers six years, including one year of linguistic practice abroad. There are also short-term courses at the Institute, for engineers and technologists scheduled for work in Oriental countries. The University's Philological and Historical Departments, for their part, give courses in Oriental history and Oriental languages (with the main emphasis on conversation).

Apart from the University, training of personnel for practical work in Eastern countries is the concern of some of Moscow's departmental institutions of higher education. Foremost among these is the Moscow Institute of International Relations, a large proportion of whose students—many of them from abroad—specialise in Oriental studies. Courses in Oriental languages and in the history and national economy of the countries of the East are given also at the Institute of Foreign Trade and at a number of other departmental institutes.

In Leningrad, its university's Oriental Faculty is, as of old, actively engaged in training Oriental scholars. Its curricula differ somewhat from

those of Moscow in that they show a marked bias for the theoretical aspects and reflect the traditional leaning of the Leningrad orientalists towards the history of the Ancient East.

In the Soviet republics of Transcaucasia and Central Asia, as already stated, the great impetus which the October Revolution had given to local Oriental Studies resulted in the formation of fully-fledged research and training institutes. These, however, differ from their counterparts in Moscow and Leningrad in that in a Union or in an autonomous republic, research is, in the main, inclined towards such branches of oriental scholarship as are more relevant to the study of that republic's past, or to a better understanding of its people's present culture. Thus, in the Transcaucasian republics, for instance, it is primarily the Near and the Middle East that are being studied (which, obviously, implies Arabic, Iranian, and Turkological studies); to these, in the Central Asian republics, are added India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan; and as to orientalists of Moscow and Leningrad, but more especially to those of Moscow—our country's political and cultural centre—their interests embrace Africa and the Far East as well.

To give you a clearer idea of what is being done in Oriental studies in the Soviet Union in general and in the Transcaucasian and Central Asian republics in particular, I shall, by way of illustration, dwell in some detail on the work conducted in the Georgian SSR—work with which I am necessarily conversant, my active participation in it dating from 1944.

In Tbilisi State University courses in some of the Oriental languages were given from the very year of its foundation (1918), namely, in Sanskrit and in Old Persian (Prof. G. Akhvlediani), in Arabic (Prof. A. Shanidze), and in Persian (Prof. J. Abuladze).

Since 1945 there is at the University a fully-fledged Oriental Faculty, the Republic's main centre for training orientalists. The Faculty comprises five chairs:

Semitics (Prof. Alexis Lekiasvili) which, apart from Arabic, offers full-scale course in Hebrew, Aramaic and Akkadian;

Turkology (Prof. S. Jikia), whose students specialise in Turkish, Azerbaijani, and Kumyk;

Iranian Philology (Prof. D. Kobidze);

Armenology (Assistant Prof. I. Shilakadze);

History of the Near East (Prof. V. Gabashvili).

The Faculty falls into two departments: Department of Philology (with its four specialities of Semitics, Turkology, Iranian Philology, and Armenology) and Department of History (three specialities: History of the Arab Countries, History of Iran, and History of Turkey).

Instruction at the Faculty conforms to a set programme of training, drawn up with the active participation of the five chairs just mentioned. The programme is subject to approval by the Council of the Faculty, which is composed of the five heads of chairs and of the Republic's leading Oriental scholars—among them, Prof. George Tsereteli, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Hon. Member of the Royal Asiatic Society; Prof. George Akhvlediani, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences; Prof. George Melikishvili, Member of the Academy of Sciences of the Georgian SSR, Lenin prize winner. The

Council's present president is Dr. G. Puturidze, Dean of the Faculty. The curriculum of the Faculty covers five years. *The Department of Philology* prepares extensively trained philologists (linguists, literary historians, textualists) specialised in Semitics (Arabic studies, in the main), Turkology, Iranian studies, and Armenology.

Students specialising in *Semitics* (Arabists, for the most part), with whom the main emphasis is, obviously, on an intensive training in Arabic studies (Classical Arabic, Arabic dialectology, Arabic palaeography, History of Arabic literature, Arabic folklore), are, in addition, offered courses in the other principal Semitic languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Akkadian), as also in General Semitics (theoretical courses, such as Introduction to Semitics, Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages).

Similarly, the following general and theoretical courses figure prominently in the curricula of the remaining three branches of the Department of Philology of the Oriental Faculty:

Turkology: Turkish and two kindred languages—Azerbaijani and Kumyk, Arabic (as being quite indispensable to a Turkologist), Turkish dialectology, Turkish literature and folklore, Introduction to the Study of Turkic Languages, Comparative Grammar of the Turkic Languages.

Iranian Studies: Persian, Sanskrit, Old Persian, Middle Persian, one of the Modern Indic languages (Hindi, Bengali, Urdu—at choice), Arabic, History of Persian literature and Persian folklore, Persian dialectology, Introduction to the study of Indo-Iranian Philology, Comparative Grammar of the Indo-Iranian languages.

Armenology: Armenian, Classical Armenian, Sanskrit, Pahlavi, Armenian palaeography, Armenian dialectology, Armenian literature and folklore, Introduction to Indo-European Linguistics, Comparative Grammar of the Indo-European Languages.

All curricula of the Department of Philology provide for linguistic practice in the language in which the student is specialising.

At the Department of History, in addition to the main courses in the history of the particular country studies—including history of historical writing, sources and criticism of sources—the following courses are also offered: History of the Ancient East, History of Classical Antiquity, Mediaeval History, Modern and Contemporary History, History of the USSR, History of Georgia, History of the Near East, Archaeology of Asia Minor, History of Oriental Culture. Moreover, a student of the Department of History has to take a course in one of the three Oriental languages—Arabic, Turkish or Persian—which has most relevance to his speciality.

And, finally, all students of the Faculty's two Departments are given a number of such general courses as all university faculties have in common (economics, pedagogy, etc.).

In the training of students a considerable role is played by the Faculty's two study halls—that of Oriental philology and that of Oriental history—functioning under the guidance of the heads of chairs.

Student study groups, their membership comprising almost the entire student body, are another factor which largely contributes to the expanding of the scope of training and to developing an aptitude for scholarly research. At the Oriental Faculty there are two such groups: that of Oriental philology and that of Oriental History.

Upon completion of his five years' course at the University, the student has to write his graduation thesis, which, not infrequently, is the product of original research. Such, for instance, are the theses of four of this year's graduates N. Babalikhvili (Hebrew epigraphy), A. Silagadze (his work treats problems of grammatical structure in Arabic), both from the Department of Philology; G. Japaridze (Arabic numismatics) and D. Gocholishvili (on the history of Arab-Transcaucasian trade relations).

Special attention is given to the compilation of texts in the various branches of Oriental scholarship, primarily of linguistic and literary manuals. Of the many publications of this kind produced by Tbilisi University, mention should be made of the following:

(a) *Chair of Semitics*: George Tsereteli, *Arabic Reader*, 1949; George Tsereteli, *Arabic-Georgian Dictionary*, 1951; Alexis Lekiasvili, *Paradigms of Arabic Verbal Forms*, 1953; Konstantin Tsereteli, *Modern Assyrian Reader, with Vocabulary*, 1958.

(b) *Chair of Iranian Philology*: Justin Abuladze, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, 1953; Vladimir Puturidze, *Persian Reader*, 1947; David Kobidze, *Persian Literature of the Classical Period: A Reader*, vol. 1, 1963.

(c) *Chair of Armenology*: Leo Meliksetbeg, *Classical Armenian Reader*, 1944; Ivan Shilakadze, *A Grammar of the Classical Armenian*, 1955.

(d) *Chair of the History of the Near East: Essays in the History of the Near East*, ed. by Valerian Gabashvili, 1957.

One of the Faculty's main objectives is to provide the necessary texts for all its branches at as early a date as possible. Wide use is also made at the Faculty of texts published at other centres of Oriental studies, both in the Soviet Union and abroad.

Since its foundation the Oriental Faculty of Tbilisi State University has trained upwards of five hundred orientalists, all specialised in Near Eastern studies. Of these, over a hundred are at present engaged in research work. Special mention should be made of the recently constituted Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Georgian SSR (its director is Prof. George Tsereteli), whose research staff is almost entirely composed of alumni of Tbilisi University's Oriental Faculty.

In the training of orientalists of the highest qualification an important role will have been played by the post-graduate courses conducted at Tbilisi University and at the research institutes of Georgia's Academy of Sciences (mainly at the Institute of Oriental Studies and at the Institute of History). Apart from post graduates, both the teaching personnel of the Faculty and the research staff of the two institutes also raise their standards of knowledge regularly, under the guidance of their heads of chairs and their department heads respectively.

As has already been stated, in the respective republics Oriental faculties of universities and institutes of Oriental studies in such centres as Baku, Tashkent, Dushanbe, Erevan, and a number of others, are also actively engaged in the work of training Oriental scholars and specialists in Oriental languages.

This work has unfailing government support and is fully ensured of further expansion.

New Trends in Soviet Education

The New Decree

by **Beatrice King**

There are always new trends in Soviet education and these trends, ideas and experiments do not, in the first place, come from above—from a government establishment, from the Central Committee of the Communist Party or even from a local Education Authority. They come, as they do everywhere in the first place, from an individual teacher or an individual school. The centralised system notwithstanding, there has always been some teacher and school with an individual approach prepared to experiment, on occasion even prepared to ignore the timetable, as I found in Moscow and Kiev.

In my long experience of Soviet education I have always found that the discussion on the different educational problems, social, methods, teacher-training, parent teacher co-operation, etc., started in a school and sometimes even in a factory. It would then spread and finally become of national importance. At this stage the highest national bodies, the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Council of Ministers, take the matter up. A series of discussions are held at which reports on the different aspects are considered. The final agreed conclusions are then published as a decree. Thus the decrees are not regarded as arbitrary instructions or directions but as approval of the best that was being done over the whole country and as a recommendation that this should be generally adopted.

This was so with the recent decree of November 1966 which in fact has only two measures entirely new, the introduction of optional subjects additional to the general curriculum for class 7 to 10/11 (ages 12-17/18) and the appointment of a member of the staff as an Assistant Head to be concerned with the out-of-school activities of the pupils. The first is a clear indication of the success of the Soviet education system which from the very beginning insisted on the same educational opportunities for all its children, which rejected the psychology of the inherited intelligence quotient. It has not proved that there are no children born with a special ability in this or that direction. It has proved that among so-called ordinary children there are vast reserves of ability in any particular direction. Given the opportunity and encouragement these children will reach great heights, thus greatly increasing the nation's gifted citizens. For many years this opportunity was provided in the special school circles and in the Pioneer Palaces and Houses. Today's situation allows these needs to be catered for first within the school. This applies mainly to scientific—a very broad term—subjects. In the arts special gifts generally manifest themselves much before the age of thirteen. Such children will go, long before this, to special music, ballet, etc., schools. It is not clear from the decree but I suspect the optional subject is additional to the compulsory timetable.

As is now common knowledge, special mathematics—physics schools for really gifted boys and girls have now been functioning for some years. These,

however, like Soviet schools of every type, are based on the ordinary curriculum of the secondary school, but the pupils being highly gifted, can work at a much faster rate than those with ordinary ability. Schools for the highly gifted academically have by this new decree become accepted nationally. In view of the success of the special schools a certain number of ordinary secondary schools or individual classes may now specialise in the following subjects: mathematics and computer technique, physics and radio-technics, chemistry and technology of chemistry, biology and agro-biology and the humanities, literature, history, etc.

The appointment of an Assistant Head for leisure activities is evidence of the importance attached to this field of education—culture—in the light of the increasing facilities provided by Soviet advance. Hitherto a pioneer organiser, usually a young person seconded by the ‘patron’ factory or trade union, aided by the school Komsomol committee, was considered adequate. Now it is no longer so. The Pioneer organiser and the Komsomol are to continue but their work must be improved, it must be brought into line with modern life and satisfy the needs of the modern youngsters. There is to be a serious shake-up in the work of the Pioneers and the Komsomol. The modern Young Pioneer has no enthusiasm for the activities which satisfied his grandmother or even his mother and he ceased to take part in the activities. The decree once again states that the Soviet school must develop on the basis of a general education, labour work-orientation and polytechnicalisation. Labour means emphasising that pupils are educated to work in whatever sphere it may be, that work is a matter of honour. Polytechnical education which gives skill as well as understanding of the principles on which production is based and of all the elements involved in production, is the chief method of linking school with life. At the same time the practice of using pupils to help out in an emergency on a farm or elsewhere and neglecting their ordinary school work is to be given up. The practical work in school workshop, on farm or in factory must come within the syllabus and be under proper school supervision. Farms, factories, institutions and enterprises are directed to help schools by ensuring the necessary equipment, tools, accommodation and facilities, and the provision of specialist teachers to ensure the success of training for work.

In connection with this a practice developing in the last few years in different places is now recommended for general adoption. It is to give help to pupils in choosing a job or profession. This is to be done by teachers, representatives from industry, from cultural work, agriculture, etc., all of whom must know the school and the situation in their district. So far there is no hint of a careers master. The school leaver should be informed in time of all the varied opportunities in every field available. As is found elsewhere the Soviet fifteen-year-old about to leave school often has no special inclination and knows little of the varied possibilities for work. The decree is concerned first and foremost with the raising of attainment—to have a more profound and more up-to-date knowledge of the sciences and of culture. The key to this problem is the Head and his or her staff. In the Soviet Union, as elsewhere, there are some who are born teachers, there are others who achieve teaching and still others who have teaching thrust upon them.

Whatever the reason, there are some bad teachers as well as a greater

number of indifferent ones, and in the whole vast land there is a sizeable number of children who stay down a second year in the same class. A child cannot, in the Soviet Union, pass up if it has failed in the end of year test or exam, nor can a child, not mentally deficient, leave school almost unable to read.

Now a voice has been raised in the National Press *Izvestiya* giving serious objections to the practice of staying down a second year. This will certainly start off discussion particularly in the education press which may lead to a better solution to the problem of failures. The decree puts the main responsibility for unsatisfactory teaching on the training colleges, education institutes, and on the Academy of Educational Science for its obviously unsatisfactory guidance and they are instructed to improve their work. The local education authorities too receive in some cases very severe criticism for their complacency.

This is by no means the first time that either the Academy or education institutes have come under fire. In any copy of *Sovietskaya Pedagogika* or *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* over the years there have been broadsides against the Academy and some education institutes. Dissatisfaction has also been periodically expressed with the work of colleges training teachers for primary and pre-school work, and with the institutes for raising teachers' qualifications. It means in fact that teacher training does not keep up with the advancing society, while there is the occasional institute which is really badly run. In the institutes training for secondary education attention is to be paid to methods of teaching the special subject and students are to be encouraged to do research work. There is discussion on a wide scale as to whether school practice should be broken up into short periods or given in longer periods.

Consideration is given at the same time to the conditions of work for teachers. In rural areas local bodies are instructed when building a school to build at the same time housing accommodation for the teachers. The teacher is to be supplied with fuel for the winter, a very serious matter in the freezing Russian temperature. That the teacher everywhere is to be accorded consideration, respect and help where necessary is emphasized over and over again.

But the teacher is only one, even if the chief, factor in the upbringing and education of Soviet children politically, morally and aesthetically. A considerable role is played by books and by entertainment as well as by parents. Since the decree states: 'It is essential that every school become the organising centre in the upbringing of the children in its area' the teacher, especially the leisure activities supervisor, is to receive varied help. The Ministry of Education and Culture, the Committees for the Cinema and the Press attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, as well as the unions for creative workers, have been instructed to work out measures for the improvement of the aesthetic education of children. This is to include new films and new plays, an increase in the number of children's plays and film shows, their increase at weekends and in holidays, the publication of a school series of home and foreign classics and modern writers, the publication of the art reproductions and the production of records

and the organisation of special concerts. Specialists and creative workers in the arts are to be involved in both school and out-of-school activities. This again is an extension and improvement of what has been going on for years.

The parents are not left out. There have been parents' school committees almost since the Revolution, not only for the benefit of the school, but also to help the parents. The decree recommends that there should be a council in every place of work to aid the school which its children attend. It is several years now since the Moskvoretsky District in Moscow started this movement, with immense success. The neglectful father or mother cannot escape the criticism of workmates or colleagues.

A series of measures is recommended to educate parents in the upbringing of children and in the general principles of education. This too has been going on since the early days of the Revolution, but there are new parents and new problems.

There is a directive concerned with school building. The number of schools built by collective farms at their own expense must run into thousands--enterprises also helped but were well behind farms. Now the decree allows an enterprise putting up a school to cover the cost from its fund accumulation resulting from overfulfilment of its plan. In rural areas 8-year schools should have a boarding house for children from distant villages. And, very important, apartments built for teachers must belong to education authorities and may not be let to anyone not working in a school.

Every aspect of education, home and school, is dealt with in the decree. The total school working time has been fixed; for classes 1-4 (7-10 years+), 24 hours a week; classes 5-10 (11-17+), 30 hours a week. In the non-Russian Soviet schools the period may be extended by two to three hours a week, because for these pupils taught in their native tongue, Russian is compulsory. The numbers per class have been fixed at 40 in classes 1-8 and 35 in classes 9-10 and 11. A certificate of merit has been instituted that can be given for one subject with an excellent mark. The gold and silver medals for all subjects examined remain. The decree affirms the oft-stated plan to have compulsory universal education from 7 to 17 years, this to be largely achieved by 1970. Today this is no longer an unrealisable aim, even though there are still spots where eight-year school does not fully function.

The decree leaves out any comment or directive on the considerable development of individual methods of approach and of organisation even within the school. Regularly there are reports of this in the various educational journals. There are some secondary schools where class 10 (17-year-olds) have no form teacher responsible for them. This began with a school where the pupils went to the Head and objected to the ridiculousness of putting someone in charge of them. The Head was wise and agreed! There are schools where the new Head has been chosen by the staff. Everywhere, in remote settlement or crowded city, are to be found teachers with an individual imaginative approach. But all this individuality harmonises with the general social purpose and political aims.

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Soviet Criminal Law

(based on a lecture given by **Professor B. S. Nikiforov** in
London on March 7, 1966)

In our approach to law we proceed from a recognition of the concept that every law and every branch of law reflect the essence of social relations at a given period in the history of a given society. Each branch of law solves the problem in its own way. Criminal legislation in the Soviet Union solves it by determining which socially dangerous acts are criminal and by establishing the punishments applicable to persons who have committed crimes. With the changing of conditions and social relations corresponding changes take place in criminal law, both in substance and in form, and to see this it is sufficient to compare criminal law at various stages of development of one and the same state or to compare criminal law of various states at one and the same period of historical development. I hope you will agree that if one attempt to transplant French law to Britain or vice versa, or tried to use Scottish law in England and vice versa the experiment would create great confusion, owing to the differences in systems of criminal law.

Consequently the evaluation of any system of criminal law must not be done in the abstract or emotionally (on the basis of 'this I do or do not like'), but from the point of view of how correctly the particular system of criminal law reflects the social relations and what effect it has on social relations. We cannot make men angels simply by passing appropriate legislation until and unless they are prepared to become angels, when perhaps appropriate laws may be useful. This is all the more important because neither the creation of law nor its application is an automatic process. It is based on an appraisal of the various situations by human beings. To appraise the effectiveness of criminal law is also very difficult sometimes, because in order to do this it is necessary to study the actual facts of life, to use statistical data, and the conclusions arrived at by the criminologists, make use of mathematics, even cybernetic devices (this is an emerging problem). In this field the task we are beginning to solve in my country is to learn how to connect the conclusions of the criminologists and sociologists with law—to learn to translate these into legal language. Otherwise these conclusions remain to a certain extent speculative and there is no possibility of using them to regulate social relations in the desired direction.

This perhaps is the reason why in our country criminology and the study of the cure for crime are the business of lawyers. I have been a little surprised to learn here that very little is done by lawyers to study these things and that there is not an adequate connection with the legal aspect of the general task.

The development of the Soviet criminal law has always (and especially in recent years) been in the direction of strengthening the struggle against crime. The crime rate is not a field in which we try to overtake and surpass other countries, and I must say that now we have some satisfactory results in this work. Crime is on the decrease in my country and the problem is to make the decrease more rapid and more even. I hope that in the near future we shall begin to publish statistics relating to crime, and then perhaps it will be possible to make interesting comparisons between the Soviet Union and some other states not only in the field of outer space. The intensification of the struggle against crime may include and sometimes does include an

expansion of the field of criminal law and an increase in punishment. But as a principle it would be a serious mistake to identify this intensification of struggle with an increase in punishment. If in order to combat crime it is necessary to mitigate punishment or not to apply punishment at all, to abandon it in favour of means of moral pressure, this is also done— this is also a strengthening of the struggle against crime, for this implies merely the use of the most effective means of struggle.

Criminal law is a very broad field, and I am therefore going to discuss only a few problems—mainly those which are most important from the point of view of increasing the efficiency of criminal law. One of these is the question of strengthening socialist legality, and at this point I am going to tackle only one aspect of the problem. Everyone who commits a crime is to be held responsible for it irrespective of any political or similar consideration if there are no legal grounds applicable in the particular case entitling us to relieve a person of this responsibility. Another aspect of this question is that no man has not committed an act penalised by the Criminal Code may be punished, and it may be interesting to note that with this in view we included in the revised criminal legislation in 1958 a special article (article 3) which says: Only a person guilty of committing a crime, i.e. who intentionally or negligently commits a socially dangerous act provided for by law, shall be subject to criminal responsibility and punishment.

Another problem. We try to make the definitions of crimes as exact as possible. This was one of the principles which guided us when we were revising the Criminal Code, a work that began about 1954. Something which in part arises from this is that the 1958 Criminal Code abolished the principle of analogy. This principle meant that if a person committed an act the court considered to be socially dangerous, the court might mete out punishment if an article existed which penalised the act not specifically but in generic form.

This principle emerged during the initial stage of Soviet power. This could be explained by the fact that social relations were changing rapidly and criminal legislation was in many respects incomplete. In these conditions analogy was in a sense a means of protecting legal order in the country. But these conditions disappeared gradually and analogy became not only harmful but dangerous, and was sometimes used not to protect law and order but to violate it.

There was a case in Byelorussia in 1936 when a man abducted a neighbour's wife at night with her consent. The husband went to the procurator and complained, and the procurator considered that this was a socially dangerous act and that something should be done. Thus he had to find an article which in a generic way penalised this act, and he came up with an article which referred to 'hunting without an appropriate permit, or at a prohibited time or by prohibited methods.'

One example of the tendency to make the definition of crime as exact as possible is that the RSFSR Criminal Code now in force contains a definition of hooliganism, of which as a matter of fact there was none before. It is not ideal, but perhaps in the future on the basis of experience we shall be able to evolve a better definition.

Let us turn to another point where, I feel, there is an essential difference between what is being done in the Soviet Union and in other countries. We are trying to enhance the part played by the court not only in assigning

punishment (this is exclusively the prerogative of the court) but also in deciding major problems arising in the process of the application of punishment. For example, it is now the privilege and duty of the court not only to sentence the guilty person to deprivation of freedom in appropriate cases but to determine the particular place of deprivation. Perhaps here I should say that we hardly ever use prisons in the classic sense of the term (the incarceration of inmates in separate cells). These are used mainly as a place where an arrested person awaits trial and for a very insignificant proportion of those sentenced to deprivation of freedom. For the major part these people have to go to correction colonies. There are four categories of these. They are colonies of:

(1) *General régime*—usually for first offenders convicted of relatively insignificant crimes.

(2) *Strengthened régime*—usually for criminals sentenced for graver crimes.

(3) *Strict régime*—usually for the second or third time offenders if the crimes are not particularly dangerous.

(4) *Special régime*—for specially dangerous recidivists who mostly have committed crimes of violence or crimes for profit.

In addition to these, another type of colony has been created for criminals sentenced to lengthy terms of imprisonment when they are not subject to early release (some types of criminals are not). These are colony settlements, and the inmates live in conditions of semi-liberty and are encouraged to build their own houses and to summon their families to live with them. This is another example to illustrate the point that the strengthening of the struggle against crime must not be identified with the purely punitive aspect of criminal law.

Another problem of a very serious and complex nature is individualisation of the measures taken in respect of criminals. Naturally the more individualised punishment is, the more suitable it can be to the crime and the criminal concerned. At the same time it is more easily seen by both criminal and public to be a just measure. In this respect it might be of specific interest to note those measures we try to apply in certain cases not in the form of punishment but as various means of moral pressure. We try to mobilise public opinion— and not only mobilise it but to give it some organised form in the activity in Comradely Courts.

In practice we take it that every reasonable human being takes into account public opinion on a particular line of conduct—the opinion of his family, neighbours and workmates. So why not try to organise this opinion and enable it to function in a more definite way? Why not do this through legislation?

We see this as one of the steps—an essential one—in the direction of transferring to the public some functions which were hitherto the prerogative of state bodies. Sample studies show that this idea and the means of its implementation in practice are giving good results. Recidivism among those dealt with in this way is low, and a considerable part of the burden is taken off the courts, which are then able to deal more deeply with more serious crimes where moral pressure is inadequate. The task now is to study the experience we already have, to analyse it and to use it to raise the general level of this work and to inform interested parties on as wide a scale as possible.

Book Reviews

The Russian Forest. Leonid Leonov, translated by Bernard Isaacs. Progress Publishers. Central Books. 21s.

Leonid Leonov was born in 1899 and therefore belongs to the generation of Soviet writers who began their literary career during the civil war and identified themselves with the new life which the Revolution began. Leonov's first novel, *Badgers*, 1924, won unanimous appreciation among his contemporaries and began his establishment as a writer of importance in Soviet literature. His work found a wide public with novels such as *The Thief*, *Sot*, *Skutarevsky*, and *The Road to the Ocean*, and his plays, *An Ordinary Man*, *Invasion*, and *The Golden Carriage*. *The Russian Forest*, written in 1953, was awarded the Lenin Prize. The plot is based on the relationship between Polyta and her father Vikhov, professor of forestry, and the story covers half a century of Russian life involving the maturing new generation and the differing life patterns and social problems of people whose work is bound up with those vast forests of the Soviet Union.

S.J.

The Smell Of Bread. Yury Kazakov, translated by Andrew Thomson and Manya Harari. Harvill Press, 25s.

The author was a music teacher in Moscow, playing in various Moscow orchestras before becoming a jazz enthusiast and performing in jazz groups at the same time. Then he joined the Gorky Literary Institute and turned to writing. His first collection of short stories was published the year after he graduated. He travels across Russia, absorbing the life of the community and making reality the basis of his creative work. Something of Hemingway's stark recognition of life's struggle is in his work and the characters react in their setting against the hazards of nature in a fashion which is as vivid as it is convincing.

S.J.

Into The Storm. Daniel Granin, translated from the Russian by Robert Daglish. Progress Publishers. Central Books. 12s. 6d.

Here is a story about air turbulence, describing a daring scientific attempt to control thunderstorms, which also gives a narrative of the variable lives of

Soviet scientists, their jealousies in love and at their work. The book attempts to present an understanding picture of the younger generation and is contemporary and graphic, depending upon the scientist for its interest, but nevertheless falling back upon age-old trends for human enthusiasms. Its up-to-date presentation of reality makes it easy to understand how it has already been translated into many languages.

S.J.

Sputnik. No. 1, 1967. Monthly Digest. Published by APN. 2s. 6d.

This first issue of 'Sputnik' is a very lively magazine with a range of articles likely to appeal to all tastes. It contains articles from the Soviet press—magazines and newspapers—presented in a condensed form. Judging by this issue it could well do more to inform the Western reader about the Soviet Union and its peoples, what they are reading, writing and talking about, than many other magazines and journals.

The articles range from 'A Russian looks at W. Churchill' to a discussion on 'The Beauty of Woman' from a new short story by Paustovsky to a review of Cornelius Ryan's book 'The Last Battle.' With photographs, humour, cookery recipes, and a Russian lesson, this well-produced Digest should be very successful.

B. P. POCKNEY.

Russia—Notes on a Course for Secondary Schools. Compiled by P. P. Whitting. Published by The Historical Association, 3s. 6d. for non members (post free), 2s. 6d. (post free) for members of the Historical Association.

A very useful booklet containing suggestions to teachers on teaching Russian history in secondary schools. It was first published in 1946 and this is a revised 1966 edition. This is perhaps unfortunate for the Historical Association because the bibliography does not reflect the large number of paperbacks which came on to the market in the latter half of 1966. Most valuable of all, many of these paperbacks are 'classics' that have been unobtainable for many years, e.g., Chamberlain, 2 vols. 'The Russian Revolution.'

J. Read. 'Ten Days that Shook the

World' and a number of others which whilst not ranking as 'classics' deserve a place in a bibliography, e.g., Bertram Wolfe, 'Three Who Made a Revolution.'

Also available is A. Werth's 'Russia and the Second War' which is likely to become the definitive work in English.

A. M. Pankratoras' 'History of the USSR' has long been unobtainable in English and is unlikely to be reprinted. But a two-volume 'History of the USSR,' Progress Publishers (in English) appeared in 1966 and although tendentious and unsatisfactory in many respects it is probably the only Soviet work currently available.

B. P. POCKNEY.

The Balavariani (Barlaam and Josaphat). A Tale from the Christian East translated from the Old Georgian. D. M. Lang. London, Allen and Unwin, 1966. 187 pp., 4 plates, 30s.

The legend of Saints Barlaam and Josaphat, who allegedly converted India to Christianity at some vaguely defined date in the early centuries of our era, has long been recognised to be a Christian adaption of the story of Buddha. It found its way into European literature—there are a great many versions, in a multitude of languages—through a Greek version. This Greek version is not a direct adaptation from an Indian Buddhist text; the story has probably passed through Middle Persian, Syriac and Arabic, and bears traces of the variety of social and religious backgrounds against which it has been set.

Some manuscripts of the Greek version state that it was translated from Georgian by Euthymias the Iberian Abbot of a monastery on Mount Athos in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The Georgian versions known until recently were much briefer than the Greek. But in 1957 Professor D. M. Lang of London and Professor Ilia Abuladze of Tbilisi independently drew attention to a much longer Georgian text, surviving in an eleventh century manuscript in Jerusalem. This corresponds more closely to the Greek version, and there is now little doubt that this text is an essential link in the chain which leads from India to Western Europe. Furthermore, it is probable, though not certain, that the Georgian text is the first Christianised version of the story and thus that it is

in Georgia that we must seek the origin of the two bizarre saints who have played such a role in European literature—the casket scene in *The Merchant of Venice*, incidentally, comes from the legend of Barlaam and Josaphat.

Professor Lang now provides an elegant translation of the new text, preceded by a long introduction by Professor Abuladze dealing with the history of the question. The volume is sponsored by UNESCO in their Series of Translations from the Literature of the USSR. It is essential reading for those concerned with mediæval literature, and to be commended to lovers of literature in general. And it is a distinguished example of collaboration between scholars of different countries.

ROBERT BROWNING.

The Daredevils of Sassoun.

In 1873 a bishop of the Armenian Church, Garegin Servantsian, whose close interest in the dialects and folklore of his flock, wrote down for perhaps the first time the story of the 'Daredevils of Sassoun' which has been published by the State Publishing House of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. This work of great scholarship has been edited by the Academician Manoug Apeghian.

The Armenians, who now number more than four millions, are a people who throughout their four thousand years of history have greatly appreciated traditions, legends and the bravery of their ancestors. To this day they have given priority of place to the preservation of their past, of which the Madenataran in Yerevan, the capital city, is one of the world's greatest repositories of ancient culture.

It is to the credit of the present reading public that most of the ancient treasures of the past are being republished in large numbers and editions and sold to an ever demanding public in Armenia and throughout the world. Professor Abeghian's work in three volumes of some 2,500 pages published in 1944 is already out of print and can only be obtained in second-hand shops in Yerevan.

Some four thousand miles away from Yerevan, in the United States, Leon Surmelian, author of one of the saddest books in English, 'I Ask You Ladies and Gentlemen' in which he recounts his youthful experiences during the Turkish massacres in his native Trebizond, picks up the pen of Bishop

Servantsian and Academician Abeghian and in a volume 'Daredevils of Sassoun' introduces the legends of Sassoun and its braves to an English reading public. World literature, especially in the West, is the richer by this wonderful labour of love.

In his introduction of some thirty pages, Professor Surmelian discusses these legends in the context of Armenian history. Himself a poet, Surmelian is obviously thrilled by the rhythm and verve of the ancient poetic lines. His blood tingles when he recalls his ancestors of Trebizond and their next door neighbours in Sassoun where mighty men amongst massive mountains, fought their battles in defence of the virtue and nobility of spirit that man has always recognised as his only mission on this earth. Justice and freedom is the battle-cry of David of Sassoun and his Daredevils.

This work, which is published in Great Britain by Messrs. George Allen and Unwin Limited, price 30s., is illustrated by Paul Sagsoorian, and is sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation in consultation with the Commission of the USSR for UNESCO, and the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic studies, should be a source of great pleasure to English readers as an introduction to one of the least tapped sources of ancient beauty and culture, and is highly recommended.

A. M. KHACHADOURIAN.

Modern Russian Poetry, edited by Vladimir Markov and Merrill Sparks. (MacGibbon and Kee, 904 pp., £5.)

This anthology is a compendium of modern lyric verse which is prefaced by a remarkably frank introduction where the tastes and predilection of the compilers are clearly set out. As Vladimir Markov is Professor of Slavic Languages at Los Angeles and Merrill Sparks an American poet and also a graduate of the University of Southern California, it is not surprising to find the publication arranged in such a way that it could find a home in any library in the United States and give pleasure to all.

Considerable space and weight are given to the corpus of work produced by 'poets in exile'—118 pages—whereas the section 'Soviet Poetry' has only 104 pages, and the work of Evtushenko is referred to rather slightly by com-

parison with the poetry of one scarcely known exile. On the other hand, if Modern Soviet Poetry is to be measured by the criteria of Rilke and T. S. Eliot, this is not surprising, and if the compilers as they stir the broth find the names of Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein and James Joyce bubbling up, it is no wonder if some of the Russian brew seem unrepresentative. I am always amazed at how the political implications of Western authors here are unnoticed but those of the Soviet Union immediately documented, and it was illuminating for me last year to hear a young East European poet discuss T. S. Eliot as a typical example of a fascist writer.

The Russian compiler states: 'The whole truth about present day Russian poetry is unknown to us'; and he concludes as if with a consciousness of some guilt: 'The worst critics of this book will be Russians . . . This book will irritate some of them by its inclusions as well as by its exclusions.' Such an open confession does not absolve the writer, for what American would dare to compile an anthology of American Poetry upon those principles?

The collection is sumptuously produced and the arrangement to balance Russian and English on opposite pages is excellent, so that the reader with only small Russian can take up the book and get something from it. Great credit is due to the ingenuity and vitality of Merrill Sparks, who has obviously devoted himself to providing the best metrical setting for each poem. Even if sometimes interpretation is strained for this (and the Russian is always beside one to check) he has brought atmosphere and much of the original sparkle within the reach of the monoglot English reader.

STOWERS JOHNSON.

Vo Ves'golos (At the top of my voice). Soviet Poetry Anthology. (Progress Publishers, Moscow. Available Collet's, 10s. 6d.)

A poetry anthology should be produced in such a way that at odd moments and in casual moods it can come to hand and be easy for the eyes. Here is an anthology produced to meet these requirements and yet containing 451 pages. Poems have been selected with a view to giving an outline of the historical development of Soviet poetry and at the same time consisting of themes and subject matter interesting

to readers abroad. Half an hour's browsing though is sufficient to convince one how successful this has been. Chronological order is followed, and a genuine attempt has been made to include poets of a wide range of talents. Blok's more complicated later work is not included for this reason of intelligibility to non-Russian readers. Some very popular examples of Esenin I was glad to see, and at the end of the collection interesting examples of the work of the younger generation that has arisen in the last few years. English students of Russian will find this a valuable book, not merely for the representative selection of material but especially for the notes and biographical paragraphs (in English) which introduce some poets to the West for the first time.

STOWERS JOHNSON.

A Trip in the North Caucasus. D. Trunov. Progress Publishers, Moscow; paperback; available Central Books, 5s.

An interesting travel book in which the life of spirit of the fascinating world of the North Caucasus Autonomous Republics is brought vividly to the reader, in colourful word pictures as well as in bright photographs. Those who know the efforts of the 19th and early 20th Century travel writers must raise their eyebrows as they read this book illustrating the changes and the progress that yet preserves the best of the old.

S. J.

Languages of USSR Peoples. The first volume of a five-volume work has been issued in Moscow as a result of the joint work of linguistic institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the national academies of the Union republics.

The purpose of the work is to describe about 130 languages of the peoples of the USSR, to determine the prospects for their development and their role in the culture of the socialist nations.

The first volume is devoted to the Indo-European languages of the USSR. Along with languages which have rich literary traditions, the first volume also deals with tongues which began to be studied only in the Soviet period.

Academician Victor Vinogradov is the chief editor. The second volume, which will come off the press this year, is devoted to Turkic languages of the

USSR, which account for the bulk of all the Turkic languages spoken in the world.

Russian As We Speak It. S. Khavronina. Progress Publishers, Moscow, 268 pp.; available Collet's, 8s. 6d.

We feel we must include a note about the second and revised edition of this little book of contemporary language material, important since an accompanying tape can be bought for 8 gns. This is an exercise for intermediate students who have worked through such books as Potapova's Russian. With the tape, however, it can bring the prospect of fluency and diction within reach of the isolated student far from a Russian-born teacher. For those older students, also, who no longer wish to attend classes, this is the way.

S. J.

Books Received

ISAAC DEUTSCHER, *Ironies of History*, O.U.P. 35s. 1966.

NORA K. CHADWICK, *The Beginnings of Russian History*, Cambridge University Press Library Edition, 1966. 25s.

MARINA CVETAeva, *Her Life and Art*, University of California Press, 1966. 58s.

MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV, *One Man's Destiny*, Putnam & Co., London, 1967. 25s.

SHEILA JONES, *A Student's History of Russia*, Pergamon Press, 1966. 18s. 6d.

WILLIAM MANDEL, *A New Look at Russia*, Evans Brothers Ltd., 1965. 25s.

I. G. KURAKOV, *Science, Technology & Communism*, Pergamon Press, 1966. 35s.

Class, a Symposium edited by Richard Mabey, published by Anthony Blond Ltd., 1967. 30s.

R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART, *The Two Revolutions*, The Bodley Head, 1967. 15s.

JOHN SWETTENHAM, *Allied Intervention in Russia, 1918-1919*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967. 42s.

D. I. FONVIZIN, *The Minor*, Bradda Books Ltd., 1965.

A. S. PUSHKIN, *Tales of Belkin*, Bradda Books Ltd., 1965.

L. N. TOLSTOY, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, Bradda Books Ltd., 1966.

ILF AND PETROV, *Five Stories*, Bradda Books Ltd., 1965.

SCR Events and Activities

We arranged a large number of meetings and visits for Soviet guests at their request between September and the end of January. The events described below were arranged by us in association with the people mentioned, who were most kind and generous in their help. We thank them all and are sure they feel that their efforts were well worthwhile. We also thank our members and friends for their voluntary help in accompanying Soviet visitors, interpreting for them and in general acting as their hosts.

SEPTEMBER

After the visit of the Kirov Ballet, we were pleased to meet the requests of a number of Soviet specialists who were visiting Britain under the auspices of the *Leningrad Peace Committee*, for whom we arranged a visit to the British Film Institute, whose hospitality was greatly appreciated, and where they were shown the film, 'The War Game.' A group of deputies was received by the Mayor of Camden, and for those interested in industrial design we arranged a visit to the British Design Centre and to Heal & Son Ltd. Two university professors visited the Extra-Mural Department of the University of London and several teachers were made welcome at Mayfields Comprehensive School.

OCTOBER

A party of *Soviet Artists*, including Shmarinov and two of the 'Kukryniksy' cartoonists were given a warm reception at the Institute of Contemporary Arts on October 3, where they met many famous British artists including Dame Laura Knight, James Fitton, Ruskin Spear and the cartoonists, Abu, Jak and Eccles. Other visits were arranged for a party of *doctors*, and for 16 *language teachers* to the Institute of Directors' Language Laboratory.

NOVEMBER

Alexei Surkov, Mrs. Surkov and Valerian Nesterov of the *USSR Great Britain Society* spent a few days in London after their visit to Scotland and Ireland and were entertained by the Mayor of Lambeth. Two members of the *Soviet Parliamentary Delegation* were entertained by the Society at a luncheon at Simpsons Restaurant. For *Nadezhda Popova*, Hero of the Soviet Union, a former pilot in the Women's Bomber Squadron during the war, we arranged an interview on Granada Television and with the *Daily Mail*.

Dr. Victor Israelyan, a specialist in the history of diplomacy, was our guest for the last week of November and early December. Among the meetings he addressed was a seminar arranged by the London School of Economics where he gave a lecture on the 'Changing Perspectives in Anglo-Soviet Relations,' a Forum on World Ideologies at the Imperial College Union which included speakers from the U.S., India and Great Britain. He visited

Cambridge where he spoke to the United Nations Association and where he met many former colleagues and friends whom he knew during his year's study there. In Birmingham he addressed the staff and students of the Centre for Russian and East European Studies at the University, and at Leicester University he took part in a specially arranged seminar. The Society was able to put Dr. Israelyan in touch with a publishing house which will be publishing his book on Anglo-Soviet co-operation during the Second World War. Everyone concerned was extremely pleased with the quality of his lectures and we hope he will be visiting us again before long.

DECEMBER

As a result of approaches made to us by the Aberfan Aid Committee, and with the support of Mr. and Mrs. Hochhauser, a special charity concert was given in Caerphilly by the *Borodin String Quartet*. A warm letter of appreciation was sent to the Society by the Aid Committee.

Aron Vergelis, poet and editor of the Yiddish journal, *Sovietisch Heimland*, was our guest for a fortnight. He gave a series of talks on Jewish culture at meetings in London, Manchester and Edinburgh, addressing the Jewish Workers' circle and attending a social evening arranged by them. He was guest at the Birmingham University Russian Club and gave a lecture on Soviet literature to the Pushkin Club. His press conference in London was recorded by the BBC for their overseas programmes and he subsequently met a number of Jewish Journalists, including representatives of the Association of Jewish Writers and Journalists, and the editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*. He also spent an interesting time with Agnon, the Israeli poet and Nobel Prize winner.

A visit was arranged for a group of *cinematographers* to Shepperton Studios and to the British Film Institute.

SCR Delegation.—Martin Lawrence and the Secretary were the two delegates concerned, the Secretary being primarily occupied with arrangements for this year's Anniversary events. Martin Lawrence visited Talin and Vilnius—some of his stimulating experiences will be described in a separate article.

JANUARY

We made arrangements for a party of over 30 specialists in *children's theatre, drama and film*, representatives of publishers of children's books, librarians and art teachers to visit the Soviet Union for eight days and to spend two days in Warsaw on their return. Marjorie Sigley's group of drama teachers, actors and dancers demonstrated their new approach to the teaching of drama to children in a number of performances. Lesley Seyd, Director of The Young Playmakers run by the Borough of Camden, and Ted Parker of the Unicorn Theatre for Children have described the group's experience in this issue.

TREVOR TAYLOR.

SCRFILM PROGRAMME

February 1967—June 1967

THURSDAY Mar. 30.—'It's Up to the People,' with Nikolai Cherkassov. EST.
'Leningrad—the City of Palaces,' English commentary.

THURSDAY Apr. 27.—'The Captain's Daughter' (Pushkin). EST.
'The Masque' (Chekhov). EST.
'The Ancient City of Pskov,' English commentary.

THURSDAY May 25.—'Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors,' colour. EST.
'The Serious Eccentrics' (on hobbies).
'The Lake Baikal,' English commentary.

Tickets available to members and their guests on application to the S.C.R.
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Forthcoming Events

SPECIALIST TOURS

For this special year of the 50th Anniversary of the Soviet Union the SCR is offering its members and friends opportunities of meeting specialists and visiting many places of cultural and scientific interest, the arrangements being made in association with Soviet societies and institutes. For each of the following groups, there will be a special programme to which will be added visits and meetings requested by the members of the groups and there will be general sightseeing as well.

ALL GROUPS WILL TRAVEL BY AIR

TOUR No. 1.—TEACHERS.

DATE.—29th March—7th April
10 DAYS—Moscow and Leningrad. PRICE—£101

Organised in co-operation with pedagogical institutes and the societies in Moscow and Leningrad.

TOUR No. 2.—DOCTORS.

DATE.—17th June—6th July. PRICE—£150
18 DAYS—Moscow, Leningrad, Kislovodsk, Piatigorsk, Tbilisi and via Ordjonikidze and Military Highway in the Caucasus to Sochi. There will be ample time for leisure and sight-seeing.

This tour is being arranged by the SCR in co-operation with the Soviet Ministry of Health, the USSR-Great Britain Society and other specialist organisations in the Soviet Union.

TOUR No. 3.—MUSICIANS —COMPOSERS and MUSICOLOGISTS.

DATE.—17th June—28th June. PRICE—£112
10 DAYS—*Moscow*—visits to the Conservatoire; Bolshoi Theatre, important libraries (MSS. sections); Taneyev's house, excursion to Klin to Tchaikovsky's house, etc.
Leningrad—the 'White Nights Festival'; visits to the Conservatoire; Kirov Theatre; Saltykov-Shchedrin (mss. section); Borodin's birthplace, etc.

(4 TICKETS to CONCERTS included in the price of the tour.)

TOUR No. 4.—GERONTOLOGISTS.

DATE.—17th June—28th June.
10 DAYS—*Kiev and Moscow.*

TOUR No. 5.—FILM FESTIVAL IN MOSCOW.

DATE.—6th July—19th July. PRICE—£94 10s.
12 DAYS in Moscow. Selection of tickets to main events will be included in the price of the tour.

TOUR No. 6.—ARTISTS.

DATE.—14th September—29th September. PRICE—£124
14 DAYS.—Moscow, Leningrad, Novgorod, Vladimir, Suzdal, Yaroslavl.

TOUR No. 7.—BALLET EXPERTS.

Miss Joan Lawson will again take a small group of Ballet experts to the Soviet Union in January, 1968.

Details from SCR, Organising Secretary.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the SCR—Saturday, May 13th, 1967,
at 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m., Old Holborn Town Hall, 197, High Holborn.**

SCHOOL AND YOUTH CHOIR COMPETITION

The SCR is arranging a school and youth choir competition.

The finals will take place on May 10th, 1967. Mr. P. G. Fletcher, the Senior Inspector of Music to the Inner London Education Authority, and Mr. Kenneth Wright, O.B.E., will adjudicate.

PRIZES

The winning choir will be invited to sing at a Celebration Concert in the presence of His Excellency, the Soviet Ambassador, at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, on Saturday, September 23rd, 1967, when John Ogdon and Mrs. Ogdon will play works specially written for the occasion by a Soviet and a British composer, and Boris Gutnikov, the young Soviet violinist, will give a recital.

In addition a typical Russian 'cup' and a number of gramophone records will be presented to the winning choir and there will be consolation prizes of gramophone records for the 2nd and 3rd places.

Details from the SCR, Organising Secretary.

SCHOOL AND OPEN ESSAY COMPETITION IN RUSSIAN

In connection with the 50th anniversary of the Soviet Union we are arranging two essay competitions for students and pupils of Russian, whose native language is not Russian. One will be an open competition and the other will be for school pupils. The Association of Teachers of Russian have been asked to nominate two of the adjudicators for each of the panels, the others being nominated by the SCR. Results will be announced on November 1st, 1967. The presentation of prizes for both competitions will be made at a special function later in November.

OPEN COMPETITION

Open to any person resident in the United Kingdom whose mother tongue is NOT Russian.

The title of the essay, *to be written in the Russian language*, is as follows:—

'Trace the developments in British-Soviet relations since 1917 in any

sphere or spheres which interest you and suggest how, in your view, such relations could be improved.'

The essay should be between 1,000 and 1,200 words long.

The first prize will be a *free holiday in the Soviet Union in 1968 OR a free place (all expenses paid) on one of the Russian language courses in the USSR in 1968*. Other prizes include sets of Russian books, gramophone records, etc.

SCHOOL COMPETITION

Open to any school pupil whose mother tongue is NOT Russian and who will be attending school at least until the end of the current school year.

The essay must be written in the Russian language. There is a choice of three titles:—

EITHER


- (1) 'Entertaining a Soviet visitor.'
OR
- (2) 'Why I should like to visit the Soviet Union.'
OR
- (3) 'British-Soviet trade.'

The essay should be between 400-500 words.

First prize will be a *reserved place (but not free) on the Advanced Summer School in Moscow in 1968*, and a *set of Russian books*. Other prizes include sets of Russian classics, of contemporary Soviet literature, gramophone records, etc.

Details from the SCR.

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For complete list of current publications and details of membership send a stamped addressed foolscap envelope to:—

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